

wherein an electrode is formed in said variable-power element in such a place as to avoid interference with passage of a bundle of rays incident upon said variable-power element.

REMARKS

This application has been reviewed in light of the final Office Action dated March 7, 2002.

Applicants have amended the specification to correct spelling, grammar and syntax errors. Both the errors and the corrections are clear. No new matter has been added.

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the allowance of claims 1-15, 18-28, 31 and 32. The only claims remaining at issue are claims 16, 17, 29 and 30. Of these claims, claims 16 and 29 have been cancelled and claims 17 and 30 have been rewritten in independent form. No new matter has been added. Reconsideration of claims 17 and 30 is expressly requested.

Claims 17 and 30 are objected to for being dependent upon a rejected base claim. However, the Examiner stated that claims 17 and 30 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

As stated above, Applicants have rewritten claims 17 and 30 in independent form. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that these claims are in allowable form.

Claims 16 and 29 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being allegedly anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,687,401 (Kawamura). Since claims 16 and 29 have been cancelled, this rejection is moot and should be withdrawn.

In sum, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the outstanding objection and rejection and passage to issue of the subject application.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address given below.

Respectfully submitted,


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APPENDIX

Application No. 09/783,072
Attorney Docket No. 03500.01513

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IN THE SPECIFICATION:

The paragraph beginning on page 2, line 22, and ending on page 2, line 25, has been amended as follows:

Japanese Patent Application Laid-open No. 7-128635 discloses a technique for adjusting the quantity of light entering a photoelectric converter by using a liquid crystal filter that has [of which dencity is] variable density.

The paragraph beginning on page 27, line 20, and ending on page 27, line 27, has been amended as follows:

In this embodiment, the above-described optical element is used to form a diaphragm or a shutter and is incorporated in an imaging lens. For example, as shown in Figs. 11A and 11B, a lens 1a₂ which functions both as a shutter and as a diaphragm₂ is formed and is placed at the end of a lens group closest to an image formation plane 4. In this manner, an optical system smaller in size and improved in performance can be achieved [acheived].

IN THE CLAIMS:

Claims 16 and 29 have been cancelled.

Claims 17 and 30 have been amended as follows:

17. (Amended) An optical system in which an image is formed on an image formation plane through a lens element, said optical system comprising at least one of a diaphragm and a shutter incorporated in said lens element [according to claim 16],

wherein said at least one of the diaphragm and the shutter is formed by an optical element having a container and first and second liquids contained sealingly in said container, said-first and second liquids being substantially equal in refractive index, said first and second liquids existing without mixing with each other, said first and second liquids differing from each other in transmittance, and said first and second liquids making the boundary between said first and second liquids having a predetermined shape and [,]

wherein an electrode is formed in said optical element in such a place as to avoid interference with passage of a bundle of rays incident upon said optical element.

30. (Amended) An optical system in which a predetermined image is formed or light of the image is converged by a lens element, said optical system comprising a variable-power element incorporated in the lens element [according to claim 29],

wherein said variable-power element has a container having a side surface inclined at a predetermined angle from an optical axis, and first and second liquids contained sealingly in said container, said first and second liquids differing substantially from each other in refractive index, said first and second liquids existing without mixing with each other, and said first and second liquids making the boundary between said first and second liquids having a rounded shape[,]

and

wherein an electrode is formed in said variable-power element in such a place as to avoid interference with passage of a bundle of rays incident upon said variable-power element.

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